CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

This research concerns opportunities and challenges in promoting student engagement: teachers' perspective. The first section of this chapter discusses the background of this research and the study's statement. The next part is the research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, scope and limitation, and definition of key terms.

1.1 Background of The Study

English is one of the most widely used languages for communication throughout the world. Many countries recognize English as an official language. English is recognized as an official language legally or de jure and publicly recognized or de facto in around 61 countries on six continents (Tauchid & Fatoni, n.d.). Acquiring proficiency in English language skills is becoming more and more important as it allows for better communication with a diverse group of people around the globe. In Indonesia, English is a compulsory subject in the curriculum and is taught as a foreign language. The Ministry of Education and Culture, through Decree No. 060/U/1993 and by the 1989 Constitution on the National Education system, mandates the teaching of English in schools. The main purpose is to equip students with English proficiency to navigate the challenges of the globalization era.

Learning English as a foreign language can be difficult because you must put in a lot of effort to understand it. Learners take a relatively long time to learn. For example, it takes learners approximately twelve years to learn English from primary to high school. At the high school level, the goal of English teaching should be to make students highly proficient in the four skills. Listening, writing, reading, and speaking are conducted according to the reading and writing levels specified by the Ministry of Education of Indonesia (Undang-Undang No. 22 Tahun 2006 Tentang Pendidikan). Unfortunately, it appears that many Indonesian teachers struggle to motivate their pupils to learn English for reasons such as shyness in performing

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their abilities, the vast number of students in a class, and students' lack of exposure to hearing and using the English language.

In developing the role of English in Indonesia, speaking fluency appears to be the primary goal for English language learners at the school, university, and general learner 19 levels when it comes to expanding the role of English in Indonesia. Speaking and oral communication are two language abilities that of pupils to communicate, express, or describe their thoughts verbally is known as oral language abilities. This ability allows students to employ their imagination and creativity when interacting with others to accomplish specific goals. This ability is necessary for language learning and understanding (Mandasari and Aminatun, 2020). This is also related to the implementation of the ASEAN free trade area. That is why English is determined as one of the main subjects in the school curriculum in Indonesia.

Speaking is a key part of learning English curriculum because it will be the basis for the growth of other oral skills and closely relates to listening. (Pendidikan et al., 2019), speaking skills are a way of communicating verbally to convey ideas and be understood by the listener, and speaking skills result from listening to someone. This means speaking skills need to be mastered by someone, then the same opinion can also expressed by (Nuryanto et al., 2018), that speaking skills are language skills that must be mastered well because they are used as an indicator of language success, one of which is in conveying the ideas they have. Speaking is a basic skill for developing other skills, namely listening, reading, and writing. This shows that speaking skills are related to other language skills. Therefore, speaking skills enable there are factors affecting speaking, for example, some factors that influence their speaking performance. Learners' speaking performance is influenced by performance conditions, affective factors, listening, and feedback during speaking tasks (Tuan and Mai, 2015).

Speaking issues are linked to a variety of factors in Indonesia, including a lack of vocabulary, grammar mastery, correct pronunciation, low self-confidence, an unsupported environment to speak English, and a curriculum that does not prioritize language development (Program *et al.,* 2023). In this instance, the most

crucial elements in the improvement of pupils' verbal abilities or communication are their self-assurance or communication for speaking. Fear of speaking in English is related to traits of the personality such as risk-taking, inhibition, anxiety, and self-confidence. Anxiety can sometimes arise when speaking a language. Severe anxiety can occasionally cause students to feel hopeless like failures students do. However, as they learn, students make connections between what they know and what they learn.

Teachers certainly face challenges and obstacles when students are asked to speak English. Teachers are an essential part of student development. They are responsible for imparting knowledge and supporting and encouraging students to develop motivation and positive attitudes to learn the subject. In order for students to communicate, teachers must use the language in authentic interactions. (Hakim, 2018), stated that Indonesian students are generally reluctant to speak English because of the lack of vocabulary and phrases to express ideas in English. Consequently, as an educator, you need an expert who can provide knowledge to students.

Fotovatnia and Namjoo also remark that a lot of Indonesian teachers find it difficult. They stated, "Foreign language learning is a hard task and a lot of effort is required every moment and over a long period to manipulate, understand, and produce the target language" (Fotovatnia and Hd, 2013). Moreover, they must go through several learning procedures, such as trying to acquire grammar and memorizing a large amount of vocabulary. Indonesian students require encouragement because acquiring English is not always easy many students struggle with their learning process given how complex it is. This is in line with (Fotovatnia and Hd, 2013) when they conducted a study in Iran, their finding revealed that English is considered difficult to learn by learners because most of them lack motivation and do not have enough opportunities to take part in the learning process. This caused learning English could be hard for them. Another research on difficulties in learning English was conducted by (Sinhaneti and Kyaw, 2012), who studied the vocabulary acquisition of students in Burmese Myanmar. The results showed that participants were unable to find creative solutions to

vocabulary acquisition due to time constraints, language course curriculum requirements, and the exam-oriented education system. Considering that learning English involves many problems, teachers need to find various techniques that students can use to minimize these problems.

Based on the researcher's experience during approximately six weeks of teaching internship at SMAN 1 Kalitidu for approximately six weeks, the researcher found that many opportunities could be improved in learning to speak English at this school and also challenges or obstacles in learning English at school. The researcher tried to ask and discuss with the English teacher what problems were faced during the learning process. And, there are still many teachers who find it difficult, the difficulties encountered in learning are related to increasing the involvement of English-speaking students and how to overcome them. The main factor that causes students to have difficulty speaking English is a lack of confidence. They are afraid of pronouncing it wrong.

The study discusses the perspectives of teachers on opportunities and challenges in promoting students' engagement in English-speaking interpersonal involvement. Teacher perceptions can help students or readers better prepare for learning so that students understand lessons. Research focused on digging further into the opportunities of challenges associated with developing student engagement in English speaking skills, and still a lack of student interest in speaking English will also be helped by the focus of this research. Based on the reasons above, the researcher believes that this research can be beneficial for students and teachers. Thus, the author would want to carry out a study titled **"The Opportunities and Challenges in Promoting Students' Engagement in Speaking English: teachers' Perspective"** because the writer wants to analyze teachers' perspectives on opportunities and challenges in promoting students' engagement in speaking English.

1.2 Research Questions

Based on the background of the research above, the problem of the research follows:

1. What are opportunities that enable teachers to promote students' engagement in speaking English?

2. How do teachers use these opportunities to achieve student engagement in speaking English?

3. What are the challenges teachers face in promoting student engagement in speaking English?

4. How do teachers overcome the challenges they face in promoting student engagement in speaking English?

1.3 Objectives of the Study

With regard to the aforementioned issue, the goals of this study are to ascertain:

1. To investigate the opportunities for teachers to increase student's engagement in speaking activities.

2. To find out how teachers used these opportunities to achieve students' engagement in speaking activities.

3. To investigate the challenges teachers face in increasing student engagement in speaking activities.

4. To find out how teachers would overcome the challenges they face in increasing student engagement in speaking activities.

1.4 Significance of the Study

The findings of the research are expected to contribute both theoretically and practical to the development of theories on opportunities and challenges in promoting students' engagement in speaking English.

This study is expected to bring some benefits, especially for researchers, teachers, and students. The researcher benefits are:

1. Theoretical significant

a. Provide an overview of the opportunities and challenges that English teachers obtain and face in teaching to improve students' English.

b. Provides a useful overview for future researchers who wish to study this topic, hopefully, this research can become a useful source of information and reference.

2. Practical significant

a. For the researcher

It is hoped that this research will provide valuable information regarding the opportunities and challenges used by English teachers in teaching English speaking.

b. For the teacher

This study will help teachers learn more about the opportunities and challenges of teaching English and develop strategies to overcome these challenges. The results of this study can provide a reference or reflection for teachers to understand the challenges that may arise in English teaching and learn how to overcome these challenges. This study aims to help teachers improve their teaching skills. In addition, teachers should understand the needs and interests of students when teaching English.

c. For the student

For students, this research provides some information about the opportunities that teachers take advantage of in the process of improving students' English speaking and about the challenges that may occur in teaching English so that students are expected to be more motivated to learn to speak English well and enthusiastically.

1.5 Scope and Limitation

The research explores opportunities and challenges from the teacher's perspective, in the field of English-speaking skills development. The main focus of the study is on the opportunities and challenges that can be exploited and faced by teachers in the process of improving the English-speaking involvement of students.

Through this research, researchers will not investigate topics such as teaching motivation or the development of skills beyond speaking.

This research topic centers around the opportunities and challenges of teachers in increasing English-speaking students' involvement. The participants in this study were three English teachers from three different schools. In addition, to complement this study, the researchers also studied methods, strategies, and approaches used in the process of learning English, especially in the context of speaking English at the secondary school level.

1.6 Definition of Key Terms

This section contains definitions of key terms or main concepts contained in this thesis. The intention is to facilitate the readers' comprehension of the thesis's context. The main words associated with this study are Teachers' Perspective, English Speaking, student engagement, opportunities, and challenges.

1.6.1 Perspective

Perspective is the thoughts, opinions, views, or assumptions of a person or group of people in interpreting certain things, behaviors, events, and phenomena. From the views and opinions in interpreting it can help other people to try and carry out the desired activities. Based on this understanding, the perspective in this study is the view or opinion of the opportunities and challenges in promoting students' engagement. With this research, researchers can help teachers find out their perspectives on the opportunities and challenges in promoting students' engagement in speaking English.

1.6.2 Speaking

(Zyoud, 2016) defines speaking as an effective concept and must arrange speaking turns in a variety of abilities working together. One of the challenges of bicycling is that it needs to be developed and practiced independently from the language curriculum.

1.6.3 Opportunities

According to experts, opportunity is a process that involves individuals or groups using certain efforts, methods, and steps to create a growing value to meet a need without paying attention to the resources used. Based on this understanding, this study found the teachers' opportunities to promote students' engagement in speaking English.

1.6.4 Challenges

The definition of a "challenge," according to the Cambridge Dictionary, is an undertaking that tests a person's competence and ability and requires a substantial amount of mental and physical work to complete successfully. The problems or difficulties that could arise when encouraging speaking English will be examined in this study.

1.6.5 Student Engagement

Student engagement, and language acquisition scholars have just recently become interested in student engagement, despite it having been thoroughly examined in educational psychology as a significant predicate of learning outcomes. Zhang and Hyland, n.d. (2022) hold, that engagement with learning activities is of paramount importance in the learning process. Student engagement, as defined by education experts, pertains to the degree to which students actively participate and invest themselves in their learning endeavors. It extends beyond mere involvement, encompassing the emotional, behavioral, and cognitive dimensions of a student's commitment to education. According to Fredricks, Blumenfeld, and Paris (2004), student engagement is characterized by a blend of a student's eagerness to partake in learning activities, their interest and enthusiasm for such activities, and their ability to persevere in the face of challenges. Student engagement refers to the student's continuous attachment to successful inside and outside classroom methods and results (Kuh and Gonyea, 2007). Students' connections to the institution are fundamental to the concept of engagement.

Institutions must provide conducive classroom settings that maximize educational potential (Nyathi and Sibanda, 2022 cited in Dubey, 2023).